

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 PC-01 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13  
AID-05 OMB-01 /089 W  
-----117264 252022Z /62

O 251927Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4690  
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 2827

EO 11652 GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PEPR,PINS, DR  
SUB: ELECTORAL BOARD CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS SITUATION "TOTALLY  
NORMAL"

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 2820,

1. MORNING PAPERS (LISTIN DIARIO AND EL CARIBE) CARRY  
INTERVIEW WITH CENTRAL ELECTORAL BOARD (JCE) CHAIRMAN  
CASTILLO IN WHICH HE SAYS THAT HE CONSIDERED THE CURRENT  
ELECTORAL SITUATION "TOTALLY NORMAL".

2. CASTILLO IS QUOTED AS SAYING HE IS SATISFIED WITH  
THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS OF MAY 16 AND THERE  
IS NOT THE LEAST DOUBT THAT THE ELECTION WAS "CLEAN".  
HE SAID THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN PRECEDING THE ELECTION WAS  
CARRIED OUT IN A CLIMATE OF LIBERTY AND THAT BOTH THE  
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VOTING AND THE VOTE COUNT ON MAY 16 TOOK PLACE NORMALLY.  
ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY INTERVENTION OF MAY 17 OCCASIONED  
AS MUCH AS A TWO-DAY SUSPENSION IN THE COMPUTATION OF THE  
RESULTS, THE SITUATION IS NOW NORMAL, SAID CASTILLO, WHO  
EXPRESSED HOPES THAT BY TOMORROW, MAY 26, OUTSTANDING  
REPORTS (ACTAS) FROM ALL MUNICIPAL ELECTORAL BOARDS WOULD  
BE RECEIVED AT THE JCE AND A FINAL VOTE TABULATION WOULD

BE KNOWN. HE SAID THE JCE HAD 20 OF THE 32 OUTSTANDING ACTAS.

3. LISTIN DIARIO OF TODAY RELEASED FIGURES OF 10 OF THE 20 MUNICIPALITIES WHICH IT CLAIMED TO HAVE GOTTEN "EXTRA-OFFICIALLY" FROM SOURCES IN THE JCE. THE PRD WAS SHOWN AS LEADING IN 6 OF THE 10 MUNICIPALITIES. A TALLY OF THE FIGURES FOR THESE 10 MUNICIPALITIES GAVE THE PRD 74,542 VOTES COMPARED TO 54,377 FOR THE REFORMIST PARTY, OR AN ADDITIONAL MARGIN OF OVER 20,000 VOTES. ADDING THESE FIGURES TO THE JCE'S LAST OFFICIAL FIGURES (BASED ON 52 MUNICIPALITIES), LISTIN PUT THE PRD LEAD NOW AT 149,166 VOTES.

4. CASTILLO IN INTERVIEW ALSO ADDRESSED QUESTION OF ABSTENTIONS IN ELECTION WHICH SOME NEWSPAPERS HAVE SAID APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN 27 PERCENT. THE JCE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT IF THIS IS THE CASE HE CONSIDERED THE FIGURE "VERY LOW." ONE MUST COUNT IN SUCH A FIGURE THOUSANDS OF DOMINICANS WHO ARE RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES WHO ARE CONSIDERED REGISTERED VOTERS. (ELECTORAL REGISTRATION IS OBLIGATORY FOR ALL CITIZENS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE AND REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT MOST LEGAL AND OFFICIAL BUSINESS). SECOND, MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO MOVED DID NOT CHANGE THEIR REGISTRATION IN TIME FOR PURPOSES OF VOTING AT THEIR NEW RESIDENCES. THESE PEOPLE WOULD HAVE HAD TO TRAVEL TO THEIR OLD RESIDENCES IN ORDER TO VOTE. THIRDLY, OTHER REGISTERED VOTERS MAY HAVE

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LOST THEIR ELECTORAL REGISTRATION CARDS AND FAILED TO TAKE OUT NEW ONES. FOURTH, A CERTAIN NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS WOULD HAVE BECOME DECEASED. HE CONCLUDED THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS WHO SIMPLY ABSTAINED WAS "LESS THAN 10 PERCENT."

5. JCE CHAIRMAN ALSO MADE POINT THAT RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS CANNOT BE CHALLENGED IN THEIR TOTALITY. CHALLENGES (IMPUGNACIONES) MAY BE MADE OF RESULTS OF EACH OF COUNTRY'S 5,500 POLLING PLACES (MESAS). (THESE CHALLENGES ARE ADJUDICATED BY THE MUNICIPAL ELECTORAL BOARDS AND MAY BE APPEALED TO THE JCE CENTRAL BOARD IN SANTO DOMINGO, THE HIGHEST ELECTORAL AUTHORITY IN THE LAND UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.) THE ONLY WAY THE ELECTION CAN BE CHALLENGED GENERALLY IS BY CHALLENGING THE RESULTS AT ALL OF THE 5,500 MESAS SAID CASTILLO, THOUGH HE DID NOT DISCOUNT THIS POSSIBILITY.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY WAS NOT ABLE TO CONTACT CASTILLO OR JCE, TODAY BEING A HOLIDAY, TO CONFIRM ABOVE. HOWEVER, CASTILLO'S COMMENTS AGREE WITH EMBASSY IMPRESSION THAT THERE ARE OTHER GOOD EXPLANATIONS FOR SEEMINGLY HIGH ABSTENTION RATE WHICH IS BASIS OF REFORMISTA CLAIMS OF IRREGULARITIES IN ELECTION PROCESS. FURTHER, CASTILLO'S

FORTHRIGHT DECLARATIONS SEEM TO INDICATE THAT JCE IS VERY  
MUCH IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AND NOT INTIMIDATED BY  
REFORMISTA MEDIA CAMPAIGN ALLEGING FRAUD. QUITE THE CONTRARY,  
CASTILLO'S COMMENTS SHOW A DISPOSITION ON HIS PART TO  
ADOPT COMPLETELY OBJECTIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD ALLEGATIONS  
OF IRREGULARITIES.  
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## Message Attributes

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